

59. Method as claimed in claim 58, wherein the analyte-specific modified solid phase reactant is selected from the group comprising analyte-specific antibodies, antigens, nucleic acids, nucleic acid analogues and lectins.--

REMARKS

With the Continued Prosecution Divisional Application filed June 7, 2001, the claims of Group III are elected for prosecution. Thus, with the above amendments, claims 14-21 and 52-59 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 43-51 are canceled and new claims 52-59 are added. No new matter is contained in the amendments.

Applicants take this opportunity to discuss the Sluka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,932,296) and Herron et al. (U.S. Patents Nos. 5,677,196 ['196] and 5,512,492 ['492]) and Reichert et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,832,165) references.

Sluka et al. disclose the coating of a surface with a specific partner of a binding pair and with polyethylene glycol. The use of a polyethylene modified reactant, as claimed in the now pending claims, is not taught or suggested by Sluka and thus would not have been obvious thereover.

Herron et al. disclose the coating of a solid phase with polyethylene glycol, which is derivatized via ethylene diamine. A solid phase binding partner, in this case a Fab' fragment of a capture antibody is coupled to the thus coated solid phase. Contrary thereto, in the presently claimed invention, defined conjugates of polyethylene glycol and analyte-specific reagents (modified solid phase reactants) are used.

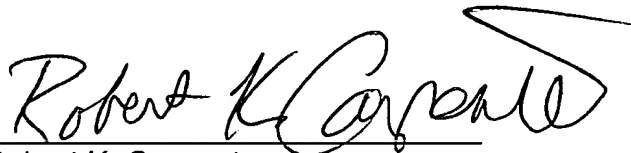
Reichert et al. only describe the saturation of the unspecific binding on a streptavidine surface by using biotin-polyethylene-glycol conjugates and is thus not believed to be relevant to the presently claimed invention.

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that anything further is desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below to schedule a personal or telephone interview to discuss any remaining issues.

Please charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account

No. 01-2300.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert K. Carpenter", written over a horizontal line.

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Attachment: Pending Claims Marked-Up To Show Any Amendments